Chapter 10
Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources

This chapter describes the historical, cultural, and archaeological resources of the Snoqualmie River Valley, and evaluates potential impacts on the resources resulting from the proposed project. The methodology and analysis are described in more detail in Appendix I.

10.1 Existing Conditions

10.1.1 Prehistory

In comparison to other areas of the Pacific Northwest, the prehistory of upland areas of the western slope of the Cascade Range is poorly understood. Due to a variety of limiting factors, including poor site preservation, the small number of sites subjected to archaeological excavation, a scarcity of radiocarbon dates, and few well-defined site components, a comprehensive cultural sequence has not been established for this region (Blukis Onat, 1987; Hollenbeck, 1987a; Samuels, 1993). Instead, many studies have incorporated sequences from the adjacent Puget Sound and/or Columbia Plateau regions, which may have more or less relevance to the project area (Lewarch and Larson, 1977; Nelson, 1969).

However, studies conducted within the general vicinity are relevant to the current investigation. Perhaps the most important investigations, due to their proximity to the project area, were conducted at Chester Morse Lake (Lewarch, 1978; Samuels, 1993). At this locale, approximately 3 miles south of the project area, a sequence of projectile points spanning nearly 9,000 years was identified. Unfortunately, the general absence of organic remains (and, thus, dateable components) has prevented the development of a comprehensive cultural chronology.

10.1.2 Ethnography

During the ethnographic period, the project vicinity is known to have been at least used, if not permanently occupied by, the Coast Salish-speaking Snoqualmie. When the Point Elliott Treaty was signed in 1855, the Upper Snoqualmie band occupied the prairies above Snoqualmie Falls and the Lower band inhabited the area from the Falls downriver to the confluence of the Snoqualmie and Skykomish Rivers (U.S. Court of Claims, 1933). Population estimates for the Snoqualmie in the mid-1800s varied from a high of 373 in 1844 to a low of 225 in 1857 (Baenen, 1981). These estimates, however, represent populations

decimated by disease and do not reflect pre-epidemic population levels (Baenen, 1981:450).

The Snoqualmie subsisted primarily on inland riverine and terrestrial resources. Salmon, steelhead trout and native char were taken along the length of the Snoqualmie River and its tributaries below the Falls during the autumn runs from September through December. Cutthroat trout were available in the Snoqualmie River and its tributaries above the Falls. Freshwater mussels and crayfish were also procured from the waterways (Turner, 1976). Upper Snoqualmie people relied on kinship ties with villages below the Falls for salmon fishing privileges, in return offering prairie resources such as deer, and camas and bracken fern roots (Larson, 1988). The Snoqualmie, in particular the Upper Snoqualmie, hunted throughout the year. Primary prey included deer and mountain goat. Lower Snoqualmie people supplemented their diets with resources from both lacustrine and marine environments. In addition, a variety of berries were available to both groups along the river and at Snoqualmie Pass.

10.1.3 History

Euroamerican settlement of the Snoqualmie River Valley is largely an extension of the Puget Basin experience. As the supply of timber was depleted in the basin, loggers and their logging camps (occasionally mounted on railroad cars) moved into the upland old-growth forest. The first settlers arrived in the late 1860s to establish homesteads, often in areas cleared of timber by the loggers. In the 1870s, settlers in the Snoqualmie Pass area leased pasture to drovers moving cattle to Seattle through the Pass; others operated way stations that furnished room and board to travelers (Prater, 1981).

Beginning in the 1870s, wherever the logged-over land was flat enough, farms were established. Cultivated crops included fruit orchards, various grains and forage grasses, and potatoes. Hops were the Snoqualmie Valley boom crop of the 1880s. At one time, 1,500 acres were under cultivation, and harvesting required the employment of 1,200 Native Americans. The collection of buildings around the Hop Growers Association farm, in the vicinity of North Bend, included a post office, cookhouse, trading post, barns, and kilns.

By 1890, a sawmill and shingle mill were operating in the North Bend vicinity. In 1904, consolidation of this mill with another resulted in the establishment of the North Bend Lumber Company. By 1914, Weyerhaeuser and a smaller company had merged to form the Snoqualmie Falls Lumber Company, one of the largest on the Pacific coast (Evans, 1990). This mill site included company houses, a company store, a school, hospital, railway station, and dormitory facilities for bachelor workers. This logging camp eventually became the present community of Snoqualmie Falls (Watson, 1992).

10.1.4 Survey Results

Prior to fieldwork for this EIS, a record search and literature review was conducted at the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP) in Olympia, Washington. The purpose of the record search was to ascertain the extent of previous archaeological surveys in the project vicinity, as well as the presence of previously recorded cultural resources or potential historic or prehistoric sites within or immediately adjacent to the study area. The King County Office of Cultural Resources was also contacted. King County Department of Development and Environmental Services (DDES) sent letters to the Puyallup, Snoqualmie, Tulalip, and Muckleshoot Tribes notifying them of the proposal and requesting any available resource information.

The review revealed no historic or cultural resources identified within the proposed project area. The only recorded sites within 1 mile of the proposed project are two trestles associated with the Chicago, Milwaukee, Saint Paul, and Pacific Railroad line, south of I-90. Just over a mile away is Camp Waskowitz, a former Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp currently used by the Highline Public School District. Historically, the camp was known as Camp North Bend and was home to CCC members working on Forest Service projects during the latter 1930s.

The literature review also revealed one project of particular relevance, an archaeological study associated with construction of SE Grouse Ridge Road (Welch, 1981) east of the proposed facility. During the study, a number of possibly prehistoric items were observed on the surface of a terrace adjacent to the South Fork of the Snoqualmie River. These included two flaked stone tools and fire-cracked rock, among a variety of modern refuse (charcoal, beer bottles, and cartridges). Shovel tests placed into the terrace contained no additional cultural materials. Excavation units placed on the terrace produced a wooden net mender and one basalt flake from the upper 10 centimeters (cm) of each unit. Based on soil profiles, it was concluded that the area had been previously disturbed and was thus ineligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The finds were apparently not recorded as an archaeological site, given that a site record does not appear within the files of the OAHP.

A field reconnaissance of the proposed project area was performed on February 25 to 26, 1999. This initial investigation was confined to the proposed mining sites, the facilities locale within the existing mining, and the route of the proposed conveyor belt. On subsequent visits, the site for Alternative 4 was examined (May 28, 1999), and the southern expansion of the Upper Site and the areas on the Lower Site were also examined (April 4, 2000).

To the extent possible, all areas of the proposed project (for all the Action Alternatives) were examined. Much of the ground surface within the project area, save the existing mine, is obscured by dense vegetation. To

increase ground visibility, 20 cm x 20 cm patches were occasionally cleared using hand tools or footwear. Unpaved roadways, furrows, drainage banks, and rodent burrows were also examined for evidence of past human activity.

No historic, cultural, or archaeological resources were identified within the portions of the project area examined. Despite the fact that much of the ground surface could not be readily examined, the project area does not appear to have a high likelihood of containing significant archaeological resources. Most of the significant sites in the region occur along the numerous rivers and lakes in the area. In addition, the area in which limited cultural materials were previously located, adjacent to the crossing of the Snoqualmie River by SE Grouse Ridge Road, has been altered by construction of a bridge.

10.2 Environmental Impacts

10.2.1 Construction and Operation Impacts

No previously identified historic, cultural, or archaeological resources are within the project area. No construction or operation impacts on historic, cultural, or archaeological resources would be caused by any of the alternatives.

10.2.2 Cumulative Impacts

No historic, cultural, or archaeological resources were identified within the project area. As a result, no cumulative impacts on these resource types are anticipated from any of the alternatives.

10.3 Mitigation Measures

10.3.1 Alternative 1–No Action

No mitigation is needed.

10.3.2 Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 (Including Limited Lower Site Mining)

No historic, cultural, or archaeological resources were identified within the proposed project area. It is possible, however, that previously undiscovered archaeological resources may be exposed during construction. Unless properly evaluated and managed, this could result in a significant impact. As a result, the following mitigation measures are proposed:

- As areas of the project are cleared of vegetation, additional field investigations should be conducted. Construction and operations crews should be trained to recognize indications of archaeological

sites. This training should include identification of archaeological resources (such as exotic stone or marine shells) and proper protocol in the event of such a discovery.

- In the case of an unanticipated discovery, all ground-disturbing activities within the vicinity of the discovery should be halted until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the significance of the find. OAHP, King County Office of Cultural Resources, and local Native American groups should be contacted to assist with the task. With appropriate consultation, impacts likely could be mitigated to a less-than-significant level.

10.4 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

No historic, cultural, or archaeological resources were identified within the project area. As a result, no significant unavoidable adverse impacts are anticipated from this project.